We claim:

1. A method , comprising:

sending power to at least one radio frequency (RF) identification (RFID) transponder (tag) by;

a) sending power P_j for a first time t_j to the tag at a first frequency f_j chosen from a list of N frequencies $f_1 .. f_j , f_{j+1} .... f_N$; and then

b) sending power P_{j+1} for a time t_{j+1} to the tag at a second frequency f_{j+1} chosen from the list of N frequencies, wherein t_j and t_{j+1} are substantially different times, and wherein the time between sending power P_j and P_{j+1} is less than a time t_0 in which the tag loses a particular tag function if no power is sent to the tag.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein t_{j+1} is chosen to be long enough that all tags in operative communication with the base station at frequency f_{j+1} have identifed themselves.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the sending of power P_{j+1} is stopped after a time t_{j+1} when no further tags identify themselves.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein P_j and P_{j+1} are substantially different powers.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein P_{j+1} is substantially reduced from P_j when t_j is too short a time for all tags in operative communication with the base station to identified themselves.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein $| t_{j+1} - t_j | > 0.05 (t_j + t_{j+1})$.

7. The method of claim 6, wherein $| t_{j+1} - t_j | > 0.1 (t_j + t_{j+1})$.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein $| t_{j+1} - t_j | > .3 \ (t_j + t_{j+1})$.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein P_j is a function of time.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein P_j is a monotonically increasing function of time.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein P_j is increased when no further tags identify themselves..